

are as a protective force. Mr. Speaker, they truly are on the frontlines, at our nation's busiest ports. They are the people who make sure that our children can walk home from that little red schoolhouse; they are the people who allow us to exercise our constitutional right to travel freely and associate with whom we like; they are the people who allow us to proclaim loudly that "I have the right to free speech," to essentially be American.

I would also be remiss if I did not take note of some of the tasks that the department faces this year onward. The Department of Homeland Security is an integral part of the plan to increase usage of safer and more efficient mass transit. We must utilize our federal dollars to improve our rail and over-the-road bus systems. We must work to ensure safe package by training workers to be the best they can and to continue to take pride in their work. These improvements must be modernized to be the best security and safety systems.

The Transportation Worker Identification Credential or TWIC program must be updated to allow for seamless processing for our workers most of whom depend on their jobs to feed their families. Border and Maritime security is the absolute beginning of what it means to be a safe country.

Transportation Security Administration or TSA workers must continue to be better trained because they are on the frontlines of our nation's airport security. These workers must also be afforded the opportunity to have collective bargaining rights if they chose and the ability to report fraud, corruption and wrongdoing. That is the essence of the whistleblower protections which we just voted to include in H.R. 1 that I fought for and will continue to press, and yes, even in a Democratic administration. Mr. Speaker, these are just a few of the laundry list of items that Secretary Napolitano and her staff will tackle in the coming months and years. I am confident though that they are up to the task of making the Department of Homeland Security an even better federal agency.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to declare my support for the employees of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and to thank them for their important service to our country. I recognize that their tireless work and dedication often keep them from their families and loved ones. Accordingly I wish to thank them for the sacrifices they make in their service to our nation.

However, I believe it is important to point out that more must be done to support all of the employees at DHS. In 2003 the former administration terminated the collective bargaining rights of TSA screeners just as TSA workers were ready to vote on joining the union of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE). Transportation security workers deserve collective bargaining rights. It is an insult to these dedicated men and women within DHS, including FEMA and Border Patrol, that their rights to organize have been denied. Transportation Security Officers deserve the same collective bargaining rights enjoyed by other employees of the Federal workforce.

I unequivocally appreciate the dedicated service of DHS employees. Their hard work and commitment to public service is outstanding and valuable.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 195.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 14) supporting the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

#### H. CON. RES. 14

Whereas multiple sclerosis can impact men and women of all ages, races, and ethnicities; Whereas more than 400,000 Americans live with multiple sclerosis;

Whereas approximately 2,500,000 people worldwide have been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis;

Whereas every hour of every day, someone is newly diagnosed with multiple sclerosis;

Whereas it is estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 children and adolescents are living with multiple sclerosis;

Whereas the exact cause of multiple sclerosis is still unknown;

Whereas the symptoms of multiple sclerosis are unpredictable and vary from person to person;

Whereas there is no diagnostic laboratory test available for multiple sclerosis;

Whereas multiple sclerosis is not genetic, contagious, or directly inherited, but studies show there are genetic factors that indicate certain individuals are susceptible to the disease;

Whereas multiple sclerosis symptoms occur when an immune system attack affects the myelin in nerve fibers of the central nervous system, damaging or destroying it and replacing it with scar tissue, thereby interfering with or preventing the transmission of nerve signals;

Whereas in rare cases multiple sclerosis is so progressive it is fatal;

Whereas there is no known cure for multiple sclerosis;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition, an affiliation of multiple sclerosis organizations dedicated to the enhancement of the quality of life for all those affected by multiple sclerosis, recognizes, and celebrates Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition's mission is to increase opportunities for cooperation and provide greater opportunity to leverage the effective use of resources for the benefit of the multiple sclerosis community;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition recognizes and celebrates Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week during 1 week in March every calendar year;

Whereas the goals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week are to invite people to join the movement to end multiple sclerosis, encourage everyone to do something to demonstrate their commitment to moving toward a world free of multiple sclerosis, and to acknowledge those who have dedicated their time and talent to help promote multiple sclerosis research and programs; and

Whereas this year Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week is recognized during the week of March 2, 2009 through March 8, 2009: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—*

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(2) encourages the President to issue a proclamation in support of the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(3) encourages States, territories, possessions of the United States, and localities to support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week by issuing proclamations designating Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(4) encourages media organizations to participate in Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week and help educate the public about multiple sclerosis;

(5) commends the efforts of the States, territories, and possessions of the United States who support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(6) recognizes and reaffirms our Nation's commitment to combating multiple sclerosis by promoting awareness about its causes and risks and by promoting new education programs, supporting research, and expanding access to medical treatment; and

(7) recognizes all people in the United States living with multiple sclerosis, expresses gratitude to their family members and friends who are a source of love and encouragement to them, and salutes the health care professionals and medical researchers who provide assistance to those so afflicted and continue to work to find cures and improve treatments.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

□ 1330

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, first let me thank my colleague the gentlewoman from California, Mrs. CAPPS, for yielding me the time. As a former nurse, Congresswoman CAPPS understands very, very well what people with multiple sclerosis must go through. I appreciate her work in managing this resolution. I thank her for her advocacy on behalf of people with MS and for working to ensure that everyone has access to quality, affordable

health care in America. Thank you, Congresswoman CAPPS.

I also want to thank my colleagues Congressman RUSS CARNAHAN and Congressman MICHAEL BURGESS, the co-chairs of the Multiple Sclerosis Caucus in the House, for working with me on this resolution and for keeping the Congress focused on MS issues. This is really a bipartisan issue, and I appreciate both of my colleagues for working together to make sure that it stays that way.

I also have to thank the over 110 cosponsors who joined with us to champion MS Awareness Week and who made the consideration of this resolution today possible on the suspension calendar. In particular I want to thank Chairman HENRY WAXMAN and Ranking Member JOE BARTON and their staffs for agreeing to bring this resolution straight to the floor, and, of course, to Christos Tsentas on my staff, who understands this issue very well and has shepherded us through this process.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the work also of the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition and in particular the National MS Society and its staff, especially Shawn O'Neail, for leading the charge to create MS Awareness Week and for helping us with this resolution. And, of course, I have to thank all of those who are living and suffering with multiple sclerosis and all of the friends and family and loved ones who care for them and take care of them when they are in need. This resolution is about commending you as well. And let me just say I have to thank my dear sister Mildred for teaching me what it is like to live with multiple sclerosis.

Mr. Speaker, Congresswoman CAPPS, I called my sister and I talked to her before I was going to share her story to make sure that she didn't have a problem with any privacy issues, and she said to me, "Barbara, if there is anything you can do to raise awareness about the condition that not only myself has, but many, many, many Americans, then just do it and share what I have to tell you." So this is her story, coming from my sister Mildred.

She said to me, "You know, it is so frustrating to go to a doctor and for me to ask a doctor a question about the symptoms of my disease and the doctor says 'I just don't know.'" She said at first she thought the doctors were just putting her off, but come to find out the doctors just don't know.

So this bill is for all of the times that she told me she gets up in the morning, and this is very typical of MS patients, she gets up in the morning and wonders whether she will be able to walk that day. Let me just say for all of the times that she is in remission, dreading the next flare-up, she said to me that every day she wonders what is going to trigger the return of her symptoms.

Mr. Speaker, she also said to me that it is very important that we raise awareness about MS and that we do more outreach and more public edu-

cation, more research, and really provide for more care for MS patients and more supportive services. My sister, I believe she was diagnosed when she was about 26 or 27. She didn't tell me I could tell her age, so I won't do that, but she is a year younger than I am and 2 years ago I celebrated the 21st anniversary of my 39th birthday. So you can figure that out.

She has been living a productive and fruitful life. She has learned about the treatments and medications. Fortunately, she has had access to some of the best, and she wants everybody to have access to the types of treatment she has had. But she also recognizes there may or may not be a cure during her lifetime, and that this Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week, which we designated for March 2 to March 8, is really the beginning of this effort. So, for that she is deeply grateful, like I know all MS patients are throughout the country.

Some people may not know what multiple sclerosis is. Let me just explain a little bit about it, because this resolution is about raising awareness.

MS is a chronic, unpredictable disease of the central nervous system. It is thought to be an autoimmune disorder where the immune system incorrectly attacks healthy nerve fibers of the central nervous system, interfering with transmission of nerve signals throughout the body. People with MS can experience a range of symptoms that can either have permanent or intermittent damage, depending on the type of MS that they have. These symptoms can include blurred vision, loss of balance, poor coordination, slurred speech, tremors, numbness, extreme fatigue, problems with memory and concentration, paralysis, blindness and more.

Most people are diagnosed with MS between the ages of 20 to 50, just as my sister was, though there is no actual diagnostic laboratory test for multiple sclerosis. I remember my sister was diagnosed by the process of elimination, given all the tests that were available then. Given the range of symptoms that occur, it is also quite common for someone to be misdiagnosed, and typically it takes about 10 years to receive a correct diagnosis.

There are over 400,000 people, 400,000 people, throughout the United States suffering from MS, and worldwide over 2.5 million cases have been diagnosed. But the real numbers of people living with MS are almost certainly higher.

Although MS is largely characterized as a disease that affects Caucasian populations, it does occur among African Americans and other minority groups and can be quite severe. As my sister said, it is a disease that really does need to come out of the closet for people of color. Because people of color tend to access the health care system less frequently, they may not get diagnosed at the rates they should.

Let me just say, our First Lady, Michelle Obama, her dad, Mr. Frasier

Robinson, had multiple sclerosis, so our First Family clearly understands the need for this awareness and for outreach efforts and for more resources put forth toward really finding the cause and cure of MS.

The causes of MS are unknown, though there are an unusually high number of MS cases among Gulf War veterans. There is no cure for the disease.

So the resolution that we are considering today will support the work of the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition in raising awareness about MS by urging States, localities and the media to participate in MS Awareness Week. Also we are pleased that the defense appropriations bill included \$5 million to fund research into multiple sclerosis among our veterans, so I look forward to working with Chairman OBEY and Chairman MURTHA to ensure that these funds are well used.

Again, let me thank all of my colleagues for their support. It is very timely and urgent that we consider this. On behalf of my sister Mildred, who lives in Las Vegas, Nevada, and all of those individuals throughout the country with MS, let me just thank you so much for your leadership and for this resolution.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 14, supporting the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week. I certainly want to commend my colleague from California, Representative BARBARA LEE, for introducing this very important and very timely resolution.

As many of you are now aware, this week is Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week, and I would encourage everyone listening today and all Americans to take some time and reflect on this disease and its impact on our families, our friends and our society.

Representative LEE talked about her sister and what the family has gone through, and I think as a physician, although I am not a neurologist, I think she explained it, Mr. Speaker, perfectly in regard to her description of the disease of multiple sclerosis. I know to her disappointment it really hasn't changed much over the 10 or 15 years since her sister came down with the disease. It is still a diagnosis of exclusion. It is hard. There is no marker, there is no blood marker, and it is very difficult. So the points that BARBARA LEE brought out are absolutely accurate and very informative.

Mr. Speaker, I have had no one in my family that suffered from multiple sclerosis. I have had some very close friends who suffer from it and are doing well. But as Representative LEE pointed out, it comes and goes. They have good days and bad days. One man, a great friend, is in a wheelchair and has been for many years, but he has had children and grandchildren. Another lady is a very good friend as well and she has had children.

But, again, this is a disease that can end up ultimately as bad as something like Lou Gehrig's disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. It doesn't often progress to that extreme degree, but I indeed had a first cousin about my age who died from Lou Gehrig's disease, so I am very much aware of this condition and very supportive of this resolution regarding multiple sclerosis.

MS and other chronic diseases like it, they change lives, and it presents significant challenges for those who suffer, for them and for their families, as BARBARA LEE mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, MS is a chronic disease that attacks the central nervous system. Essentially MS heavily impairs and prevents nerve cells in the brain and in the spinal cord from communicating with each other. They just can't make that connection. So those symptoms that she described, from numbness in the limbs, loss of vision, and, yes, even eventually paralysis in some cases, are very unpredictable, and, of course, it can vary from person to person.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately for the 400,000 Americans living with MS, the cause of the disease, as I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks, remains unknown. But I want to recognize and applaud the work currently underway at NIH, the National Institutes of Health, and other medical research institutions across the country to improve the lives of people with multiple sclerosis. There is little doubt that our collective resolve to find a cure remains undeterred, as demonstrated by this great resolution.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the co-Chair of the Multiple Sclerosis Caucus, our colleague, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CARNAHAN).

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlelady from California for her leadership and work on this. I am very proud and honored to be co-Chair of the Congressional MS Caucus with my colleague Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS. This is truly a bipartisan effort and one that just had tremendous resources and support from around the country to help raise this awareness. I encourage everyone to show their commitment and support of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week and the MS movement with really simple actions throughout this week, MS Awareness Week, March 2 through 8.

MS Awareness Week was created by the MS Coalition to raise national awareness about the disease and to recognize those who have dedicated their time and talent to promoting MS research and programs.

In order to raise awareness, I am very pleased that Representative BARBARA LEE has taken the lead to introduce H. Con. Res. 14, recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of MS Awareness Week, encouraging the President, State and local governments

to issue proclamations designating MS Awareness Week, and encouraging the media to help educate the public about MS. Today, I ask for all of my colleagues' support.

I want to give a special thanks to the MS Society back in St. Louis, Missouri, my home, that has been so active and been so helpful to me in this effort, and also want to remember my first cousin, Betty Carnahan, who we lost years ago and who first helped me learn about this disease.

Because of small gestures by everyday people, my colleagues in this body, and cutting edge research by our Nation's finest, each day people living with MS have a better and a brighter future to look forward to.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve my time.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I wish to speak on H. Con. Res. 14 by rising in support of it, as I do, in recognition and support of the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week, and I do so on behalf of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of the Central Coast of California, which does such great work in raising awareness of the issue and raising funds to support their work and the work of the Society across the country, and also in providing vital services to those afflicted with multiple sclerosis who are my constituents.

This week of awareness and recognition takes place from March 2nd to March 8th, and it is an honor to speak on behalf of this awareness, commending as I do my colleague from California, Ms. BARBARA LEE, whom we heard, who introduced this resolution along with the cochairs of the Multiple Sclerosis Caucus, Mr. CARNAHAN and Mr. BURGESS.

□ 1345

Many of us have very special people in our lives who live every day with MS. I know I do, and I'm thinking right now particularly of one young friend.

Multiple sclerosis, as we have been discussing, is a chronic and unpredictable disease of the central nervous system. Four hundred thousand people throughout the United States and 2½ million around the world are suffering today from multiple sclerosis. It's thought to be an autoimmune disorder where the immune system incorrectly attacks healthy nerve fibers of the central nervous system, interfering with transmission of nerve signals throughout the body.

People with MS, as we know, experience a range of symptoms that can be either permanent or intermittent, depending on the type of disease that they have. These symptoms can include blurred vision, loss of balance, poor coordination, slurred speech, tremors, numbness, extreme fatigue, problems with memory and concentration, paralysis, blindness and more. And as we have heard from Barbara

Lee's sister's story, it's very hard to diagnose, and often takes years to do that. And it afflicts people, often women, between the ages of 20 to 50.

There is no actual diagnostic laboratory test for multiple sclerosis, and so many questions about it. It's quite commonly misdiagnosed.

Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week was created by the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition, a group of affiliated organizations, to help raise awareness and to leverage additional resources to fight this disease.

The resolution we are considering today will support the work of this coalition by urging States, localities and the media to participate in MS Awareness Week, and by encouraging people, including Members of Congress, to educate themselves about the disease.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPPS. I yield back the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 14.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

#### NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE MONTH

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 45) raising awareness and promoting education on the criminal justice system by establishing March as "National Criminal Justice Month".

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 45

Whereas there are approximately three million Americans employed within the justice system;

Whereas approximately seven million adults are on probation, parole, or are incarcerated;

Whereas millions of Americans have been victims of crime and, consequently, lost income, incurred medical expenses, and suffered emotionally;

Whereas the cost of crime to individuals, communities, businesses, and the various